



I LOST MY SENSE OF IRONY IN BRISBANE.

"A MELBOURNITE'S IMAGININGS OF BRISBANE"

When I asked Myles about the weather (he is from Brisbane and was going up at the same time) he told me it was warm up there. Like the mid 20s. T-shirt weather. That was hard for me to understand. This winter has been exceptionally cold. When he told me this it was freezing and sheet rain outside.

In the 90s there was this bad soap of unknown actors called "Paradise Beach", set in the Gold Coast and intended to be Australia's first breakthrough soap on the American market. (of course, it was an epic fail including domestically). Everyone on Paradise Beach was central-casting gorgeous and tanned and perpetually in bikinis. Then there was this annoying pale girl with curly red hair. She didn't wear bathers so much. I think she was the anguished artist type who couldn't really go out in the sun. So I picked up on the delinquent on sun, surf n sports and high maintenance artistic types and figured such tensions would be relevant on hour's drive north.

I should add here that I have been to the Gold Coast before, but I don't talk about it because the circumstances were very fucked. It was in a serviced apartment highrise. I did not see much. We went to the theme parks. The end.

For Brisbane, I imagined large government sandstone buildings, like Sydney. And huge Moreton Bay fig trees.

"ACCOMMODATION: THE LARGE HAPPY FAMILY"

I knew it was going to be unique. Annie Shandon's Inn. Their guests are "budget-conscious but prefer more comfort than backpackers hostels can provide" and the Inn's motto is "You are not a guest in this house but part of a large happy family" amidst "country_style decor".

It absolutely lived up to its online promises. Garden furniture indoors. Pot plants. Fake flowers in baskets. Home crafts adorning wallpapered walls. Decorative straw hats, suspended lace parasols, terra+cotta wall hangings saying "Welcome" or featuring painted ducks. Wayne, springing up from behind you asking if you slept in, because he waited and waited downstairs at continental breakfast time and you didn't show up.

Trapped indoor humidity mixed with the heavy stench of Glade TM airfreshener embedded even in the bedsheets.

Painted flowers on bedspreads, curtains, doorknobs. Brisbane hospitality and the feminine touch. The male guest going into the women's bathroom to blow the snot from his nose into the pink vanity sink.

"BRISBANE: A NEW WORLD CITY"

The tired, stained carpet in the grubby Virgin Blue terminal. Aged, concrete pavers on the streets tinted and shaped like cat biscuits I haven't seen since the 80s as a kid. The original 80s neon boardwalk mall sign on Queen Street. All the neons. Weird strips of industrial carpet stuck down in narrow strips with black gaffa tape crisscrossing the entire mall for unknown logistic reasons.

The pub with all the windows open, with the band playing Australian 80s covers on the Friday night with the topless lead singer some rock god in his tartan pork pie hat. (Nobody wears that shit).

Girls, walking around with this season's winter fashion ~~walks~~ winter boots and mini skirts. White trash. The woman I caught the back of wearing ~~sharp~~ sharp angular shoulder pads in her white executive suit. (Powerdressing in 2010?)

Again and again, I kept seeing things that

were ironic that weren't, that finally I didn't know what to believe. That no cafes in Brisbane/s CBD served freshly squeezed juices. Or iced coffees. In that climate. That was not being ironic. It was just how it was. The woman with enormous laughable hairprayed set bleach-blonde hair, powerwalking along Southbank. She was not being ironic.

The fake inner city beach with imported sand from Moreton Bay on land itself reclaimed. That wasn't ironic. Androniki and I, sitting in the mall on Friday night eating McDonalds. That wasn't ironic either.

An entire city's restaurant culture permanently set to "Pancake Parlour" where drinks are proudly served in sundae glasses, and every menu boasts large, heavy bogan anglo hot winter meals in a city who's winter is still summer.

Painted concrete elephant statues positioned amongst the palms, novelty statues of fat Italian chefs or Pinnochios by the entrance. Chalked blackboards on Southbank advertising hot pumpkin soup on a 28 degree day. I was lost and perplexed in a city I didn't understand.

"THE BRANDED BEACH"

We came upon it blindly and did n't know what to think. A fake ornamental-styled lagoon beach on Sout bank overlooking the river and back on to the city. I was disgusted. I totally disapproved.

A corporate, engineered, fake beach with strategically placed smooth rocks, and palms growing oblivious to the wrongness. Everything about it was totally wrong.

And enchanting. It was ingenious and beautiful. It made me want to tear off my clothes and get in there. By the second visit I decided the Streets TM beach rocked.

It was perfect for people with chronic fatigue and little toddlers and people without cats. The signs asking people not to swim within 14 days of having dioherrea was a little off-putting, and I had originally been concerned about the lizards and Ibis birds being fooled

by the water and then getting sick from the chlorine, but you just shut your mind from that and get seduced by the controlled climate conditions, the blue sky, the palms and the white sand over the concrete bottom in the middle of the city. Fucking A. It made mwe want to live in Brisbane. Here was a free public swimming pool slash fake lagoon with filters tucked under little wooden walkways and everyone was enjoying it. Specially me. I was waring black jeans and a dark t-shirt

"THE ZINE FAIR - 1 - BUYING MY OWN ZINE"
We were obviously looking forward to the mini zine fair, it was a fun evening and I got to meet people I only knew through correspondence.

It was a nice little evening and I got to meet cool ziney people. Brisbane has a newly banded collective ('Papercuts') (yes, another zine collective called that) and the new but unfortunately named Smells Like Zines distro, ~~zine~~ I was going to collect my first order from the distro in person. ~~xxxxx~~ The online catalogue had been pointed out to me in Melbourne by a friend who saw my old zine listed. This was a zine I last did twelve months ago. And they were pretty much exclusively stocked at Sticky. So basically, What The Fuck. Was someone making duplicates of an old copy? (the most despicable, ethically wrong thing anyone can ever do in zine culture. I decided to order three copies of my zine through Elouise to see what would happen. And here she came towards me now, with my order.

She showed me the titles and told me Erinsborough Exploits was good. It was the newest issue and by the guy who did Cane Toad Warrior. I flicked through it + it was one of the issues I had run off as a freebie with the plain cover. It had my stitching and the original insert envelope intact. Now here they were getting sold for a dollar.

This is not a new issue, I told Elouise. I opened the front page and showed her the date + Nov 08. 'Oh' she said. And it hasn't come out of NSW, it's from my PO box in Melbourne (as written on back cover). "This is my zine". Frankly, Elouise didn't seem that thrown. Luke Bartolo had sent them to her with all his other stuff, and even though my zine was strictly anon (ie no credited author), she'd just assumed it was by Luke and advertised it as such. (also a massive violation of zine ethics). I was bemused. But the more I thought about it, it was definitely Zine Scandal of 2010.

The whole incident was bemusing. Made more surreal by it's lack of incident. Zines are highly personal artefacts. You don't retail them like discount socks. How could

Elouise - a zinester herself - not be utterly horrified at my dramatic revelations?

And how could anyone run a distro - the ultimate labour of obsessive love - and not even know the zines they were selling? Or have looked through even the first few pages? (-insert agitated exclamation marks here, I don't have them on the Olivetti Dora) ...how could she remain so unaffected? And Luke Bartolo (-insert more exclamation marks) WTF (exclamation marks, and so on).

"THE ZINE FAIR - 2 - THE MICROCOSM FACTOR"
Full mega props to Jeremy who I took to be a main driving force behind the collective, getting people together, organising stuff, etc. He told us he had been an "Australian Intern" at Microcosm a ~~xxxxx~~ year ago on his travels (which was the subject of his new zine which I have beside me and will read shortly). It surprised me that Jeremy was unreserved about connecting himself to Joe Biel. "That's a bit controverserial" I said to him waiting for a reaction. (I'm like that, if it's not already obvious). "What, Joe and Sparky, or Microcosm being incorporated? he asked me. As soon as I mentioned Alex Wreck's name he shook his head and said he preferred to keep out of that stuff. But honestly? Since Alex wrote the ~~breakxux~~ Irreconcilable Differences issue of Brainscan, it's impossible (if you have a connection to Microcosm) to honour your preferences

to 'stay out of it' like a kid not wanting to get caught in a divorce. I say: Too Late. You cannot NOT acknowledge the political clusterfuck that microcosm has become. And let me say this: all the stuff that has come out about microcosm is clearly bad. But the most objectionable thing aside all the personal personal stuff is that microcosm were making duplicates of their zines in stock to sell on and ~~obviously~~ obviously profit from. That is like zine scandal of the new century.

So what's the take home message to all of this. When you align yourself to things - religion, individuals, organisations, inanimate objects & you need to have formed a considered opinion. But I've just read Jeremy's zine ('Whenever I see a bearded hobo on the street I'll think of you and smile') and I've figured Jeremy is not really into considered opinions. (That's not meant to sound bitchy, read his zine and you'll know what I mean.

PO "POST ZINE FAIR"

Once Androniki and I had lugged the 22kg of zines back up the wooden fire exit to the second floor at Annie Shandons, we decided we'd go down the street and get some dinner. The temperature had dropped outside, it was cooler, but still deliciously mild. The city was full of people like it was daylight (I love that with warm weather) And yes, Androniki and I ended up on Queen St Mall eating McDonalds. Watching the people. I guess it was like 9.30 or 10pm. Jeremy and his papercut collective crew walked passed and we laughingly acknowledged each other. Then later, maybe half an hour, they all came back walking towards us. I asked

Androniki if I should be personally offended that they didnt invite us to join them after the fair to go get something to eat/drink/ or hang or whatever. Androniki said No. But I thought about it some more~~xxx~~ and I figured that yes, I was in fact offended. (I'm also like that). We threw our empty McDonalds packaging into the bin and walked back to our hostel room.

"LETTERS FROM THE EDITOR"

TO JEREMY.

Don't be upset by what I wrote. Now that I've read your zine I can see you're amoral and I can respect that. (God, again, I didn't mean for that to sound bitchy. But I figure if you're into the Suicide Girls despite the politics of their management, then you're not all righteous and shit like me). I was happy to be in Brisbane. We had a great time.

TO ELOUISE

I resent the fact you have my name and misspell it with a 'u' even if that spelling is more true to the pronounciation. Don't take that personally I am not used to other people having my name

and I am naturally possessive. (Also an only child).

Do feel bad about selling my own zine back to me. Definitely feel bad about not knowing about the zines you are distroing

TO LUKE BARTOLO.

What the fuck. Passing on old zines to distros for cash or absence of cash is just plain weird especially when the zinemaker has no idea. It is creepy and wrong. I recommend you quit it and concentrate on making your own stuff.

TO MYLES

You were right about the weather.

TO CANDACE.

Thank you for loaning me the book,
'Josef Fritze
'The Crimes of Joseph Fritzel'. It did
not turn out to be suitable reading
material, staying at Annie Shandons Inn.

TO OLIVETTI

I will never understand your fiscal reluctance
reluctance to include a "one" key or an
exclamation mark. However I respect that.

TO THE READER

These are just my personal thoughts.
Everyone has personal defects. Myself
especially, let's make that clear.

"AFTER THOUGHTS"

Brisbane is in the middle of heaps of
construction. It's what the taxi driver
told us as he drove us into the city amidst
roadworks. And Southbank was half closed off
undergoing massive earthworks and whatever.
Even the Virgin Terminal at the Brisbane
airport promised it was having a makeover
soon and to Watch This Space.

Speaking to Myles tonight he felt it would
be another 2 15 years before one could enjoy
the changes. I believe all these things
to be true. When Southbank is finished it
will be amazing. Hopefully they can also
schedule a complete redevelopment of Queen
St mall at some stage.

Brisbane has a high ratio of Bogans. It is not as cosmopolitan as I just naturally assumed. I saw people walking around in thongs, something that you just don't do in public in my culture unless you are in walking distance to the pool or beach. But people were wearing thongs in the CBD and to my horror Androniki also did this. People wear boardies in the city with no irony. A lot of people smoke. There were a lot of tats. There was nowhere good to go for icecream, yet in Melbourne where it is cold most of the time, we have ri vall specialist icecream vendors. How do you explain that?

Another thing I learned from Myles is that the beach used to be the Kodak Beach. Now it is Streets Beach. So the naming rights live on. And it turns out Myles used to be one of the Kodak lifeguards. What a guy.

There was no real deliniation between pale artistic types and the sun surf types. I saw Emo Goths getting their gear off as eagerly as anyone to get into the fake beach water. And thongs are like the niversal language of equality.

I was delighted to see Ibis birds hanging around Southbank like seagulls except more dangerous. That is so cool. I really really like Ibis birds. Also I saw lizards which I also extremely admire. Nbt so much of the Bayans or Moreton Figs but more palms. Palms are cool.

Thank you for having us, Brisbane. Next time I will have bathers.

elle-sept 2010- gpo box 4201 Melbourne Vic 3001



GO BY 5

P1 Court
P3 Shirt
P4 Hare
P5 Kook
P6 Fashi
P7 Padd
P8 Fashi
P9 La Co
P10 Paddi
P11 Cafe
P12 Coffe
P14 Merin
P15 Paddi
P16 Pussie
P17 Paddi
P18 Mary

CBS

GO BY 

- D1** 7-11 S
D2 Coffee
D3 Milano
D4 Queen
D5 Oasis c
D6 Newsa
D7 Hungry
D8 141 Qu
D9 Cafe E
D10 Pedest
D11 Pig'n'V
D12 Tatters
D13 Macart
D14 Watch
D15 Shrine
D16 Grod

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